

**Erie County Department of Mental Health
Housing Planning Group
Meeting Summary
March 14, 2006**

Participants: Donna Crawford, Sean Fallon, Amy Frances Millard, Jean Jones, Reah Brown, Heather Laney, Janice Nelson, Amy Upham, Amy Tucci, and Joe Auria

Facilitator: Eric Weigel, Erie County Housing Coordinator

Summary of meeting topics/discussion:

1. HUD renewal/new project submissions

Funding is now available for new proposals. Time is critical, as some closing dates have already passed. HUD is the primary source of funding for homelessness.

2. Safe Haven

Lake Shore has taken the lead role in collaboration with RSI in working toward implementation of this program to target the chronically homeless. Minimal restrictions will provide a starting point for stabilization and recovery. The proposal calls for 20 beds with the possibility of 5 additional respite beds. A search is being conducted for a suitable property to use.

3. Grace House

This shelter has few restrictions with an emphasis on recently paroled offenders. Rev. King is seeking to increase capacity by 40 beds. There is a need for the integration of services to assure the best chance of success in reducing the recidivism rate. Concerns were raised about the mixing of sex-offenders with other types of offenders.

4. Altamont Housing

Although this work-release program has worked well in the past, funding has been eliminated by the Department of Corrections. It is hoped that other sources of funding may be obtained. A referral process is currently being arranged to service individuals within SPOE.

5. Home Ownership Process for Everyone – HOPE project

This project provides a workable goal for certain individuals to provide stability in their lives. Low income loans from OMH and consumer credit counseling will help to ensure the best chance of success. Participation is encouraged for any consumer who is interested in purchasing their own home. Contact Homefront at 856-2952 and specify the HOPE Project for assistance in this process.

6. Workforce Investment Board – WIB process

The ECDMH is coordinating with the WIB to provide a referral process for individuals who show an interest in employment opportunities. The goal is to orient Care Coordinators to the Buffalo Employment and Training Center (BETC) first and then begin to incorporate consumers into this process.

7. Future Housing Needs

Participants were encouraged to maintain awareness of emergent needs for difficult to place populations. Ideas for improving access and assistance are sought on an on-going basis.

New Business

No new business was discussed.

**Next Meeting: Tuesday, May 16, 2006
 @ 9:00 am**

**McKinley Square
2704 Main St.
Buffalo, NY 14214**